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Question/Comment

Thank you for accepting my written testimony regarding the Group 2 Code Proposals. As a Thurston County Commissioner, and vice chair of the Thurston Climate Mitigation Plan Steering Committee, I urge you to support the proposed changes.

Energy use in residential buildings is the region's largest source of emissions by sector, accounting for 35 percent of total greenhouse gas emissions in the Thurston region, and natural gas use in homes accounts for a fifth of that total.

The framework adopted in the Thurston Climate Mitigation Plan includes commitments to increase the energy efficiency of homes and shift more appliances, heaters, and vehicles to electricity, and includes the following actions: Update codes to require electric appliances in new construction, and phase out new natural gas connections in new buildings over time.

Additionally, we know the benefit of heat pumps is financial efficiency for the builder (it's cheaper to build than with fossil fuels), the homeowner (decreased housing costs and ongoing energy rates), and on the overall electrical load as a whole (increasing electrical load will be minimal). Additionally, the move to clean-powered buildings will create new jobs in the construction and HVAC industries.

Again, I encourage your support of the proposed changes to the 2021 Washington State Energy Code, International Building Code, and Wildland-Urban Interface Code. Thank you for your consideration.